

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An information input apparatus, comprising:
  - an imaging device that captures an object image and forms digital images of a subject;
  - a sound recording device that records sounds in a state of recording mode;
  - a storage medium that stores at least one of the digital images formed by the imaging device and the sounds input by the sound recording device;
  - a release switch that initiates a process of capturing the object image by said imaging device when a user operates the release switch;
  - a sound effect output device that outputs a preset non-mechanical sound effect that signifies initiating the capturing process by said imaging device when the release switch is ~~operated; and~~operated;
  - a control device that connects to the sound recording device, the storage medium and the sound effect output ~~device;~~device; and
  - a judging device that judges whether the apparatus is in the recording mode;
  - wherein while in the recording mode, the control device controls the sound effect output device to prevent outputting of the preset non-mechanical sound effect when the user operates the release switch to initiate the capturing process.
2. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:
  - a view finder through which the subject can be observed; and
  - an information output device that outputs visual information within the viewfinder, wherein the process also stores the at least one image in the storage medium,

wherein the control device further controls the information output device to output a visual release switch indication when the release switch is operated.

3. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 1, wherein the preset non-mechanical sound effect is a shutter sound effect, wherein the storage medium stores a plurality of types of the shutter sound effect, and wherein the sound effect output device outputs one of the plurality of types of shutter sound effect when the release switch is operated.

4. (Original) The information input apparatus of claim 1, wherein the storage medium stores the images and the sounds together.

5. (Original) The information input apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a setting device that sets a photographic environment, wherein when the release switch is operated the sound effect output device further outputs sound effects based on the photographic environment set by the setting device.

6. (Original) The information input apparatus of claim 5, wherein the setting device is a compression device that compresses the images formed by the imaging device at a selected one of a plurality of compression rates.

7. (Original) The information input apparatus of claim 6, wherein a frequency of the sound effects output by the sound effect output device is changed based on the selected compression rate.

8. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 6, wherein the setting device further sets an information input apparatus operating mode, wherein the sound effect output device outputs the sound effects based on the operation mode set by the setting device.

9. (Original) The information input apparatus of claim 8, further comprising a changing device that changes the sound effects corresponding to the operation mode.

10. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 1, wherein a sound playback device silences all or part of the preset non-mechanical sound effect when the preset non-mechanical sound effect is included in the sound stored by the storage medium.

11. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 10, further comprising a selection device that selects whether to remove the preset non-mechanical sound effect included in the sounds output by the sound playback device, wherein a sound removing device silences all or part of the preset non-mechanical sound effect when removing the sound effect is selected by the selection device.

12. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 10 further comprising a deleting device that deletes all or part of the preset non-mechanical sound effect from the sounds output by the sound playback device when the preset non-mechanical sound effect was included in the sounds that the sound recording device records.

13. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 1, wherein the information input apparatus includes the sound playback device that outputs the sounds stored in the storage medium, and wherein the sound effect output device is controlled by the control device to selectively output a preset sound effect having a frequency incapable of being recorded by the sound recording device, incapable of being stored by the storage medium, or incapable of being played back by the sound playback device.

14. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a display that displays the images formed by the imaging device and the images stored by the storage medium.

15. (Original) The information input apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an illumination device that illuminates the subject with light.

16.-23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling an information input apparatus, comprising:

capturing an object image and forming digital images of a subject using an imaging device;

judging whether the apparatus is in a recording mode;

performing sound recording of sounds occurring near the information input apparatus using a sound recording device in a state of recording mode;

storing the digital images formed by the imaging device and the sounds recorded by the sound recording device in a storage medium;

operating a release switch to initiate a process of capturing the object image by said imaging device when a user operates the releasing switch;

outputting a non-mechanical sound effect that signifies initiating the capturing process by said imaging device when the image forming process is initiated; and

controlling recording, storing and outputting of the non-mechanical sound effect; wherein while in the recording mode, preventing outputting the non-mechanical sound effect when the user operates the release switch to initiate the capturing process.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising:

observing the subject through a viewfinder; and

outputting visual information within the viewfinder, wherein the process also is an image recording process that stores the images formed by the imaging device in the storage medium, wherein the visual information is a release switch operation indication when the release switch is operated.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising setting the photographic environment with a setting device, wherein the sound effect outputting step

outputs the non-mechanical sound effect based on the photographic environment set by the setting device.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the setting step sets an information input apparatus operating mode and the outputting step outputs the non-mechanical sound effect based on the operation mode set by the setting device.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising:  
playing back the sounds stored in the storage medium with a speaker; and  
silencing the non-mechanical sound effect when the sound effect is included in the sounds recorded by the sound recording device.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein the silencing step comprises deleting the non-mechanical sound effect from the sounds when the non-mechanical sound effect is included in the sounds recorded by the sound recording device.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising playing back the sounds stored in the storage medium with a speaker, wherein the sound outputting step with the sounds input by the sound recording means, includes selecting and outputting a sound effect using a frequency outside a frequency range of the sound recording device, the storage medium or the speaker.

31. (Previously Presented) The information input apparatus of claim 1, where the preset non-mechanical sound effect is customizable.

32.-40. (Canceled)

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising customizing the preset non-mechanical sound effect.

42.-57. (Canceled)